

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-6 and 10 are pending in the application, with 1 and 6 being the independent claims. Claims 7-9 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-6 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,634,446 to Ima ("Ima") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,617,764 to Komura *et al.* ("Komura"). The Examiner's position is that Ima teaches all elements in claims 1 and 6, except for axle housings, but that Komura supplies the missing elements. However, each of the transmissions of claim 1 and claim 6 (as amended) has an axle housing having a portion to be mounted onto a vehicle frame (*see, e.g., portion 80a of Fig. 2 of the present application*). Neither Ima nor Komura discloses axle housings having "mounting portions for mounting to the bodywork frame," as recited in claim 1. Nor do Ima and Komura disclose an axle housing having "a portion to be mounted to a vehicle frame," as recited in amended claim 6. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Nonstatutory Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 1 and 6 were rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 of U.S. Patent No. 6,616,563 to Inoue *et al.* ("Inoue"). A terminal disclaimer is filed herewith to overcome this rejection. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Other Objections

Claims 2 and 6 have been objected to for certain informalities. Claim 2 has been amended to correct the word "displaced" to --disposed--, as requested by the Examiner. In claim 6, the Examiner asserted that a contradiction exists regarding when the pair of left and right axles are to be connected with each other in a differential manner. Claim 6 has been amended to delete "in a differential manner" in line 4 to correct the asserted contradiction. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

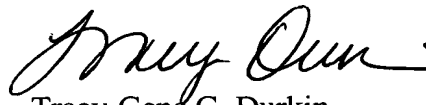
All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will

expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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